



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: August 15, 2019

Agenda Item: Stimson Lumber Recreational Access Agreement, R1

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background: FWP has worked with Stimson Lumber Company over the past few years managing recreation the company allows on its land in Lincoln and Sanders counties. The 100,801 acres is enrolled in FWP's Block Management program, which provides free public access during the fall big game hunting seasons. The proposed biennial rule will provide year-round recreational access for public use.

Public Involvement Process & Results: The commission endorsed the tentative recreational management area rule for public comment at the April 25, 2019 commission meeting. The proposed rule was posted on FWP's website for 30 days from July 2 through August 1, 2019 and Region 1 FWP issued a statewide news release with details on how to comment. FWP received only one comment. That comment fully supported the newly proposed rule.

Alternatives and Analysis: Managed public access will help reduce the resource damage, vehicular damage to soils and vegetation, and excess disturbance to native wildlife including threatened and endangered species. Without these rules, Stimson Lumber Company may be forced to increase restrictions on public use and ultimately close these lands to public access.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: FWP recommends the commission approve this proposed rule. The rule would allow FWP to work in partnership with Stimson Lumber Company to provide a significant amount of managed public recreational access to high quality lands.

Proposed Motion: I move that the commission approve the Stimson Lumber Company Lands Recreation Management Area Biennial Rule.